Modernisation of Armed Forces

2611. SHRIMATI AYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to modernise the country's armed forces;

(b) if so, the steps taken on that direction during Eighth Five Year Plan;

(c) the fund earmarked thereon for the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) The strengthening and modernisation of the defence forces is an ongoing process which engages the attention of the Government on a continuing basis.

(b) Steps have accordingly been taken for the modernisation and upgradations of the equipment and weaponry of the armed forces, during Eighth Five Year Plan.

(c) and (d) Action to prepare the estimates of funds, required during the Ninth Plan period has been initiated, in consultation with the Defence Services. Disclosure of details will not be in the national security interest.

Report of Arun Singh Committee on Defence expenditure

2612. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of Arun Singh Committee report on defence expenditure, especially the recommendation relating to the streamlining of defence procurements; and

(b) whether the recommendations are being strictly followed while procuring the defence equipment, and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) A number of recommendations were made by the Committee on Defence Expenditure, headed by Shri Arun Singh, in a series of reports which the Committee iself classified as "Secret". Besides, the report also commented on same sensitive matters which were not included in its terms of reference. It is not desirable to disclose the details of the report, which are both secret and sensitive.

Shortage of spare for Bofors gun

2613. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Bofors guns purchased;

(b) the provision for spares in the purchase agreement; and

(c) the number of Bofors guns not in use due to the shortage of spares?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (c) A contract was concluded with Ms Bofors for procurement of 400 numbers of Guns, support vehicles, ammunition and 5 years' package of spares in 1986. 10 additional Guns were given by the supplier, free of cost. At any given time, a few Guns may be temporarily off the road for maintenance or repairs. This constitutes a small percentage and does not affect the efficiency of the Army

Augmenting air and surface defence

2614. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister, during the course of a day-long sea exercises, 'Jal-Avalokan' on board the VIRAAT, observed that while intrusion of Pakistan Aircraft did not by itself constitute a security threat to India, the continued induction of sophisticated arms in neighbouring countries and landing ot